

A  
L E T T E R  
T O A  
G R E A T M A N  
I N T H E  
C I T Y o f *WELLS*.

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*By a STOCKING-MAKER.*

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*Why, Man, he doth bestride the narrow World  
Like a Colossus, and we petty Men  
Walk under his huge Legs, and peep about  
To find ourselves dishonourable Graves.  
Men at some Time are Masters of their Fates;  
The Fault, dear Brutus, is not in our Stars,  
But in OURSELVES that We are UNDERLINGS;*  
SHAKESPEAR.

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## A LETTER, &c.

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**A**FTER ballancing with myself for some weeks past, and very seriously considering whether I should give you, sir, the trouble of reading, and myself that of writing the ensuing letter, many reasons have at length determined me to this open public address. As I do not intend to sign my name to it, (not being ambitious of the character of an Author) so I shall not prefix that of the person to whom it is directed: and this, I take it, will not be without its conveniencies to us both. In the first place it will wave all ceremony, and of course supersede the necessity of casting about in my mind how to grace you with the proper epithets of your rank, your function, or your dignity. It will besides save us both a world



of blushing ; on my part, for the awkwardness with which I must appear in my first attempt to be a writer ; and on your part, sir, for the honest truths which you will hear before I lay down the pen. For the mode in which you will hear those truths, I will not undertake to answer, as I am unskilled in the art of adorning my stile, of polishing sentences, and giving specious colourings to plain matters of fact. A rough honesty will be the highest grace I shall be able to reach ; and with that rough honesty let me enter at once upon the subject of this letter.

The promotion of Lord Digby, our late worthy representative, to the dignity of a Peer of the realm and a Lord of parliament, has made a vacancy for the city of Wells. Two candidates have offered themselves, viz. Peter Taylor, Esq. of Bircot near this city, and \*\*\*\*\* Child, Esq. who I am told is a banker at Temple-bar. For the former gentleman, whom I have long known, it is my intention to vote at the ensuing election, and this, it seems, has given umbrage to you, sir, who would fain persuade me to favour the pretensions of a man, whom I never heard of in my life, before you thought proper to recommend



mend him to the FREEMEN of Wells, or rather to the CORPORATION. You have arraigned my conduct upon this occasion, and the charge against me does not lose in the carrying, such is the merit of your agents in helping about falsehood, calumny and nonsense. I am charged with ingratitude, for I have heretofore met with civilities at your hands; with faction, for I presume to think for myself; with rebellion against your power, for I do not put my conscience into your care to be governed as your supreme authority shall think fit; and in short, I disturb the peace of the borough, which for many years has been a sine-cure to the freemen, managed wholly by yourself, who, it must be confessed, have shewn as great dexterity in packing a lay-corporation, as if it were a spiritual one, and wholly within your province. To vindicate my character from the aspersions thrown out against it, is the design of this letter; and to that end, I reason in the following manner.

I take it to be a true maxim that England can never be undone but by a parliament, and I take it to be as true, that it will never be undone by a parliament, if the representatives of

the people are chosen by the free voice of their constituents. Men may be bribed to work the general ruin, but without some powerful motives to warp the judgment, the true permanent interest of every place that has a right of sending deputies to the great council of the nation, will be fully understood, and the election will generally fall on those who are supposed to be able to promote that interest. In this case, the character of each candidate will prove his strongest recommendation, and it will then be the duty of the electors to weigh that character and give their votes accordingly. This, sir, is my idea of the conduct to be held by every person who has a voice in the nomination of representatives in parliament; he is a trustee for the public; the right of voting is given him by the constitution for constitutional purposes, and no others. To barter it away for personal obligations is to make a sacrifice of the good of numbers, to the little narrow views of a base and selfish individual. Gratitude is a virtue; but let me add that the patron, who would extinguish all feelings for a community, who would destroy the independency of a citizen in his public capacity, exerts an insidious friendship, and while he expects a return for his

his favours at the expence of conscience, he expects what he has no right to in a moral sense, and therefore his claim, being founded in corruption, is utterly void. I hope, sir, that your doctrine is not the reverse of this, for, if it is, it will very ill become your function. A minister of the gospel will not dare to avow so pernicious a principle; and should he do it, every honest man will abominate that system of morality, which in plain English tells him that he must renounce his duty to his country to merit your protection, or in other words, that he must be the meanest slave in order to be grateful to you.

I have, it is true, been one of the herd who for too long a Time have been drove by you to the political market; but I appeal to yourself, have I ever received a farthing of the money I was sold for? I acquiesced under your usurpations of power, for I did not know where to turn for redress. The opportunity is now fair, and I embrace it chearfully: where is the ingratitude in this? cast up the account fairly between us, and the obligation was conferred upon you. Your consequence with the great was supported by our tame submission: your pretensions to lawn-sleeves were



founded upon the pusillanimity of the voters ; your pride was gratified, nay bloated with it ; you was thereby enabled to swagger at turn-pike-meetings, and petty-sessions, with all-sufficiency, and to impress an opinion above that you had created for yourself at Wells, a temporal as well as a spiritual tyranny.

But perhaps it is on the score of public benefits, during the course of your management, that you make a demand upon freemen for their votes at the ensuing election. I am ready to join issue with you upon this point. Where are the monuments of your goodness ? you must not point to your larder or your cellar ; that sort of liberality must not be admitted as a plea in your favour : independent men have a right to object to it ; situated as you have long been at Wells, to have wanted hospitality wou'd have been an impolitic and a sordid vice ; and surely as a moralist or a divine, you will not place any considerable virtue in giving corporation dinners. That you have occasionally the dictates of a full belly to declare in your favour, and that your praises often rise in mens stomachs, I do not mean to deny ; nay I will be candid enough to own, that I have marked your guests issuing from  
your

your house in a manner which plainly shewed that you had treated the whole doctrine of temperance with great contempt. Let me do you justice: to the social pleasures of eating and drinking too much you have never been an enemy. - But I have not called upon you for the memoirs of your table; about your butcher's bill I am wholly unconcerned; your patriot spirit, your services to the corporation of Wells, those are the articles in which I desire to be instructed. What branch of trade, during these last six and twenty years, has been encouraged by you? has any and what manufacture been established at Wells since you became dictator in the borough? acts of this kind would have redounded to your honour, and brought inestimable advantages to the town: an increase of population would have followed from it; houses now mouldring into ruin would have been repaired and well-inhabited; industry would have worn a warm and thriving countenance; master-traders would not have been deterred from undertaking commissions in their business for want of hands, and we should have boasted a laborious, diligent, and flourishing sett of freemen, instead of seeing numbers distressed by poverty into a low and abject submission to the pride  
and

and arrogance of you, sir, and one or two more, who shall be nameless at present. But to introduce a comfortable affluence among the voters was never your intention; independency might spring from it, and then it would not have been easy to make a self-interested job of the borough, and to violate that freedom which the law requires in elections of members to serve in parliament.

Since, therefore, private friendship (if a confederacy in evil purposes may be called friendship) can give you no right to controul the consciences of honest men, and since from public emoluments you derive no sort of merit, upon what ground would you establish that arbitrary power which you claim over our sentiments and opinions upon the present occasion? Finding yourself appointed our spiritual guide, did you conceive that you was therefore to be the framer of our political creed, and the disposer of every man's judgment and inclination? Permit me, sir, to speak my mind with freedom upon this head. To the constitution of my country, as it is by law established, both in regard to church and state, I am in the sincerity of my heart a warm and a zealous well-wisher; and as on  
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the one hand, I should abhor that statesman who should attempt to trample upon the rights of the clergy, so on the other may I never live to see church power erected upon the ruins of civil liberty. The ecclesiastical and the temporal orders of the state have been long settled upon their proper basis; the line has been drawn between them; and whenever either the one or the other shall attempt to make encroachments, and to arrogate to itself more power than has been assigned to it by our ancestors, it will then aim at an undue enlargement of its influence, and where that influence prevails it will be downright tyranny. The days of priestcraft were the days of slavery: whoever is but slightly versed in the annals of this country, knows with what ambitious strides sacerdotal pride extended itself over the kingdom, 'till liberty was at length rescued out of the hands of pious oppression, and delivered down to us as the noblest legacy, our most valuable inheritance. May we never surrender it again, sir, either into your hands, or those of any other person, who shall think proper to exceed the boundaries of his duty, and become an absolute borough-jobber, instead of a teacher of the gospel. When I say this, let me be understood to have all due respect

respect and reverence for the character of a clergyman: I know many who do honour to their cloth, and even in your own corporation I could name those who are happy enough not to live their days within the vortex of your politics, and still preserve their principles untainted. Their example it wou'd become you to imitate; but if that would be too great a condescension, I could desire you to lift your eyes to your superior, and take from him the lessons of moderation, and a just contempt for faction and party-rage. The consequence would be that you would live with the good wishes of mankind in the evening of honourable days. You would now, upon the point of passing from nature to eternity, be principally employed in thinking of the kingdom of *the Elect*, instead of busying yourself, with a most irreverend ambition, about an election of the unfaithful upon earth; and you would leave behind you a character worthy to be held up as a pattern to those who may hereafter succeed to your preferments. I shall not pause here to delineate the features of the character which unhappily must now stand upon record amongst us; but I will look forward, and tell you the dreadful consequences my imagination starts at, should you be able to transmit

transmit an ill-gotten power to another sanctified dictator, who, encouraged by your success, may come to exert a pernicious influence in elections, and follow the principles he will find in that CODE of SLAVERY which you are likely to leave behind you.

I figure to myself, sir, a young clergyman of a strong athletic frame, who may early distinguish himself at Oxford, not by an attention to the precepts of religion, but at the head of a band of rioters, where, among the singular achievements of his youth, his forcible entry into a meeting-house, and his triumphant exit with the pulpit on his back shall acquire for him the stile and title of MAJOR. Encouraged by this, he may proceed in his career to Bristol ; there he may again display his genius amidst election-mobs, may beat his curate in the church-yard, and rise to the preposterous dignity of REVEREND COLONEL. In this motley character, the Colonel may preach, and the Parson may get drunk, 'till it shall be time to add the renown of perfidy to his character by a desertion of his old friends, and then in a fit of political hypocrisy, like another VICAR of BRAY, he may turn Whig, and be as turbulent for the house of Hanover,

as



as he had formerly been for other men and other principles. Thus, unmindful of his function, neglecting all the important duties of his calling, constant at election dinners, never in the pulpit, inflamed with faction, not religious zeal, more addicted to a returning officer than the evangelists, as unversed in heathen literature as the sacred text, potent in his cups, impotent in his passions; hospitable, without generosity; frank, without sincerity; proud, imperious, and illiberal; such a fellow may, in evil hour, be promoted to the principal stall in a cathedral. In this station, what will be the first act to which the ingredients of his nature will prompt him? It will probably be an undutiful and indecent quarrel with his bishop; for how should such a temper brook a superior? proceeding from outrage to outrage, such a genius will not lie still, 'till he has drawn upon himself a sentence of excommunication. Thus interdicted, he will feel no remorse of conscience, for it is not his God he wants to serve; but he will struggle with all the mortifications of disappointed pride, and will then for the first time conceive a desire of shewing himself in the pulpit, not to inculcate the doctrine of humility and other Christian virtues, but for the jest-sake, because he knows

knows that the turbulence of his temper, and his public contempt of all decency and order, will not fail to raise a general laugh in the congregation. He will intrigue, cabal, and wriggle therefore to get himself appointed a Lent-preacher at Bristol ; and should the bishop of that diocese determine that his pulpit shall not be thus degraded, he will presume to write him a letter in terms of the highest disrespect and insolence. His suspension taken off, pride like his will disdain to make a proper apology for the errors of his former conduct ; but he will take upon him to refuse his own immediate superior the sacrament, asserting with real malice that his bishop is not fit to be admitted to the communion-table, on account of his want of charity. Should his lordship, thus treated with unparalleled effrontry, behave upon the occasion with a meekness that does honour to his character, our Priest-militant will proceed to act with the same spirit in worldly matters, that has already distinguished him in affairs of ecclesiastical concern. Should a scruple of conscience, which is now and then the infirmity of weak but honest minds, upon some election-day, seize an indigent voter, and induce him to declare that he comes to poll with a bribe in his pocket, our electioneering  
divine

divine will be a political casuist upon the occasion, and solve the difficulty with a *Po! po! swear un—swear un—the sin is upon those who tender the oath, not upon him that takes it.*—Thus like Hudibras he will explain away the sanctions of an oath, which have ever been held the most sacred bands of civil society.

As thus: a breach of oath is *duple*,  
 And either way admits a *scruple*;  
 And may be *ex parte* o' th' maker,  
 More criminal than the injur'd *taker*.  
 For he that strains too hard a *vow*,  
 Will break it like an o'erbent *bow*:  
 And he that made it, forc'd and broke it,  
 Not He that for convenience took it.

Moreover, should a respectable clergyman be called upon to preach an assize sermon, and with a force of eloquence set forth the horrors of *perjury*, and *subornation of perjury*, our pious politician, impatient of all salutary admonition, will instantly cry out, *The fellow means me; I am libelled in my own pulpit—a shan't ba' it again*; and then lashing himself into wrath, he will with difficulty be restrained from sending instantly to silence the preacher, even in the face of the learned judges, who approve the doctrine, and wish it could be  
 deeply



deeply impressed upon all ranks of men throughout the kingdom. I will just give one specimen more of this character, and then have done with it, for its deformity grows odious. Should a gentleman of an independant spirit, eminent in a learned profession, and equally respectable for the qualities of his head and the virtues of his heart, happen upon some occasion to clash with the designs of our spiritual tyrant, he will determine in the fury of his revenge to double-tax him. An appeal of course will be made to the quarter-sessions; our hero will cut a leaf out of the book of rates, and be ready to swear he did not do it; unless the generosity and moderation of the party aggrieved shall inform him in the face of the county that he has witnesses ready in court to prove the fact, and for the sake of his cloth dissuade him from so flagrant a violation of truth. In short, a character like this will proceed, like a snow-ball, still gathering in its course, 'till it has subsisted upon the face of the earth for seventy years and upwards, playing every game for parliamentary influence, electing trustees to charities in order to create votes, appointing commissioners to turnpikes, licensing ale-houses, and prostituting law, gospel, truth and justice, for the purposes of in-

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ordinate

ordinate pride, and for the establishment of a tyranny not to be matched in any other borough in his majesty's dominions.

This, sir, is what I dread may one day be the case at Wells : I do not say it is so now ; every freeman will judge for himself ; and thus much I will venture to say, every well-wisher to the town he was born in, will exert his honest endeavours that such a vassalage may not long subsist amongst us. We have now an opportunity to make one glorious struggle to recover our freedom : if we lose it, our condition will be both wretched and shameful : if we stand forth with a manly firmness, it will be to our honour that we are determined to break our fetters, and assert our independency. We have a town-born candidate, who has done more good in a single year than all our representatives for a long tract of time. We know his character : malice itself cannot traduce it : we are no strangers to his ability to serve us, and we have proofs of his inclination : he does not want to represent the D—n and C——r only ; he means to represent us all ; he desires our free votes, and it will be our pride to chuse him in preference to a stranger, whom we never

ver saw, 'till under your wing he lately made his appearance ; and by the specimen he then gave of his abilities, I am very confident our loss will not be considerable, if we should have the good fortune never to see him again.

From what has been said, it is logical to conclude, that you, sir, have no right divine to tyrannise over our consciences, and take away from free-born men the right of thinking, judging, and chusing for themselves. You will say, perhaps, that you do not act alone in this business: act with whom you will, the voice of the county is against you ; all ranks and orders of people cry out shame against so unnatural an opposition, which would fain prefer a stranger to one who was born and bred amongst us. The popularity which Mr. Taylor enjoys in the town, the acclamations that attend his name wherever he goes, very plainly demonstrate what are the wishes and opinions formed in the present juncture. But give me leave to ask, who is your confederate in this work ? is Mr. T—dw—y the person ? I will suspend my opinion of that gentleman 'till I see him close the scene in this Comedy of Errors. I shall wait 'till the last act, and then I will give my



judgment upon the character he sustains. If he persists to the end of this political drama, to wish that the freemen of Wells may not elect a townsman for their representative, I will then tell him that he has acted a part which becomes him less perhaps than any man in the world : for let us consider how Mr. T—dw—y has been treated by the people of Wells. He was a stocking-maker in this town ; I do not say this to depreciate him ; I am a tradesman myself, and I respect those of my own level and condition in life ; he was of a fair character, and for his rank no incompetent understanding. I have talked with Mr. BALL, with whom he worked as journeyman : his QUONDAM MASTER speaks very handsomely of him. I find he was well paid, and that he diligently earned his wages. When an accession of fortune raised him in the world, he met with no envy or malice : the freemen joined to raise him still higher ; they made him their deputy to parliament, and rejoiced in the opportunity of reposing their confidence in a townsman, without making any invidious reflections upon his birth or his education. When Mr. T—dw—y declined to serve any longer, they paid him the compliment of chusing his son. What is the case at present ? Mr. T—Y-

L—R'S

L—R's ancestors were all known in the corporation; he went early in life from this place to settle in London: he carried with him a small fortune, and his industry soon procured him success in business. He has been a man of property in this neighbourhood for a number of years. We rejoiced to hear that he was thriving in the world, and he was ever glad to see a Wells-man in London. During the late war he was employed in Germany, in a very important public trust; and that he acquitted himself with honour I have a right to presume, for no complaint is made against him. That his post was lucrative, and that he now enjoys a splendid affluence, I most heartily rejoice, for two reasons, first, because I am pleased with the good fortune of a townsman, and secondly, because I am glad we have at length a person of spirit and ability to look despotism in the face, and retrieve the honour of his native borough. Mr. T—yl—r has now, in the adjacent parishes, three times the property of any other man in the corporation; he pays of course the greatest proportion to the rates; he has an affection for the place of his nativity, and I am willing with a number of others to give him my voice at the ensuing

election. Will Mr. T—dw—y be the man to tell me, don't do it? will he say to the freemen of Wells, don't choose a town-born candidate, but let your election fall upon a stranger? how will that advice come from the mouth of Mr. T—dw—y? can he *bear like the TURK no brother near the Throne?* will he say in his own case chuse me or my family, and when Mr. Taylor offers himself, will he cry out, reject a townsman, and prefer a banker at Temple-Bar? This will be blowing hot and cold with a vengeance. The doctrine will appear to all men of sense absurd, unnatural, and impolitic; and let me add, if he shews a stranger the way to purchase the borough in despite of that laudable partiality which we all naturally bear to those who were born and have lived among us, the expedient will be dangerous and may one day recoil upon himself. This is the season of Nabobs, and the general election is not very distant. I wait therefore to see how Mr. T—dw—y will conduct himself in this nice and important crisis.

But it seems you, sir, have strong objections to urge against Mr. T—yl—r: you have already urged them in the hearing of many of us; and I shall give them their due weight.  
He



He is, you say, of an unbounded ambition, and now that fortune has dealt out her favours to him with a liberal hand, he is a BASHAW in his temper ; he will not be contented with a single seat in parliament, but has formed a design to engross the borough to himself. His best and most powerful friends know his designs ; they are at the bottom of the opposition set on foot against him ; Mr. T—dw—y is obliged upon the principles of self-defence to make a stand in behalf of Mr. C—d ; and in short, Mr. T—yl—r by offering himself at present means to enslave us deeper than ever.

These, sir, are your own givings out : you cannot recede from the words, or at least from the purport of them. If your allegations be true, I am willing to suspend my intentions in favour of Mr. T—yl—r ; but on the other hand, if the whole is of your own coining, what must we think of you, sir, who thus uncharitably bear false witness against your neighbour ?

Before I open the facts, which will throw the clearest light upon this matter, I will make you one concession, which is this :—The tale you have ventured to send abroad into the

world, though it will not embellish your moral character, yet certainly in a political light it does honour to your talents, for in fact you was put to your last shift, and it was worth your while to hazard the fiction, however absurd and improbable it may appear to thinking men. A person well versed in state-matters (I think it was *Cardinal De Retz*) used to say, *Give me a political lie, that will live but one day, and the mischief it will work in that time, will not be easily cured.* Though I do not mean to rank you with the reverend statesman, whom I have just mentioned, yet in the under parts of his character you may very well imitate him. Little dexterity and cunning are qualities not above the reach of your genius. Accordingly, your story found a vent, and for a day was current amongst us. It staggered our opinions; and in our perplexity we applied to Mr. T—yl—r for an explanation. He disavowed the imputation in the most solemn and peremptory manner. He assured us he had done all in his power to preserve peace and good neighbourhood, and that he had even promised you to act in concert with Mr. T—dw—y, and not to canvass for a single vote 'till he first applied for yours, of which from your own declarations he thought

thought himself certain. In consequence of this, as soon as the vacancy happen'd he waited upon you to request your concurrence. The mask then fell off, and your language was as extraordinary as perhaps ever passed from one gentleman to another. I will throw it into dialogue in the genuine manner in which it happened. I wait upon you, sir, for your vote and interest—*Sha't not ba' it*—But, sir, you promised me—*It's a Lie, I did not*—But, sir, if you will be so good as to recollect—*I tell thee it's a Lie, and sha't not ba' it*.—But what have I done, sir, to alter your sentiments so very much since we last talked this matter over? *Thee hast associated with my enemies*.—I did not know you had any enemies; who are they?—*Here the names of some of the most respectable gentlemen of the town were mentioned*, with this positive declaration, *I'll never forgive thee for it*. The conference could not be very long after this; with great composure of mind Mr. T—yl—r retreated, and immediately went to solicit Mr. T—dw—y's vote; that gentleman chose not to be at home. Your measures then appeared to have been artfully preconcerted; and the name of Mr. C—d was, for the first time, heard of by the freemen of Wells. Mr. T—yl—r still wished nothing  
more



more than to preserve the quiet and harmony of the borough : he applied himself to the first gentlemen of the county, who were then in town at the assizes ; he was desirous that his character should be canvassed, that the objections to him should be laid open, and if at a proper meeting he cou'd not justify himself, he was willing to abandon his pretensions. Even this proposal was rejected ; the plot began to thicken, and it was visible that his exclusion from parliament was the point you had resolved upon. The secret machinations however of your JUNTO were not sufficient to deter him from offering himself a candidate. He appealed from your determinations to the general voice of the freemen, and what that voice is, you, sir, and your agents in the corporation, are by this time, to your great surprize, fully informed. And now let me ask you, in this proceeding, which I have stated fairly, are there any marks of that over-bearing ambition, of which you complain ? Where is the proof that he ever formed a design to hold this borough as you have done, in a state of vassalage to himself ? he declared, it seems, to you, that he would turn out Mr. T—d. w—y, and bring in both the members : can any man of common sense give the smallest degree

degree of credit to this assertion ? Allowing that he had conceived such a project, is it probable that he would confide the secrets of his heart to you, whom he knew connected in politics most intimately with Mr. T—dw—y ? We all know Mr. T—yl—r to be a man of sense, and you must prove him an idiot before we can suppose him capable of such an egregious act of folly. But what reason can be assigned for your not accepting the proposed meeting ? why did you not come forth and charge him with it ? the answer is obvious : you would have heard his absolute disavowal of the intention imputed to him, and in the face of men of rank and honour you would have seen him ready to bind himself by the most obligatory ties never to give any trouble to the sitting member upon any future vacancy. What he said upon all private occasions, he would have declared publicly, that he had no objection to Mr. C. T—dw—y, but on the contrary that he entertained very honourable notions of that gentleman. But to bring matters to this issue, would not have answered your purpose : a coalition between two members, who are natives of the place, would effectually put an end to all your dreams of power. That they would both in all future elections

elections merit the favour of the freemen, is a probability too strong and glaring : what then must become of that hierarchy which you have so long maintained in the corporation? ye long expected, ye dear lawn-sleeves, farewell! **THE HIGH PRIEST'S OCCUPATION'S GONE!** A disaster like this was at all events to be prevented. A specious pretext was necessary to colour the intended opposition, and Mr. T—dw—y's apprehensions were to be alarmed, that he might be deluded from a pursuit of his own true and real interest to co-operate with your schemes of ambition. So far you have succeeded. You have plainly evinced your dexterity in acting upon the passions of the human mind, but how far the mind thus acted upon has given a proof of its penetration and judgment, I shall not stay to enquire. Thus much I must observe, that in matters of importance to be governed by imagination, is a weakness that for ever leads to error and disappointment. In cases where facts can be resorted to, the suggestions of fancy will furnish but a poor apology for misconduct. When a person, of whatever situation in life, inconsiderately does an injury to another, it is idle to say, "I thought so," or "I was told so"; he should have acted upon the surest ground.



ground. I once saw a passionate fellow knock a gentleman down in a London coffee-house without any previous warning; he gave for his reason that he thought the party thus madly attacked intended to do the same to him, but the court of King's-bench was not satisfied with that sort of logic, and a very heavy fine was the consequence. Were it otherwise, Don Quixotte when he attacks a barber, mistaking his basin for an helmet, or when he makes a furious onset upon a windmill, thinking it a giant, must be allowed to act consistently with sound discretion. When *maids turned bottles call aloud for corks*, it is true they fancy they have occasion for corks, but fancy is not enough to justify them. The most that can be said, is, that *they reason right upon wrong principles*, and sorry I am that there is no better a palliative for Mr. C<sup>L</sup>. T—dw—y's present conduct. Nay, I am afraid he will be divested of that apology; for when disadvantageous ideas of Mr. T—yl—r were first impressed upon him, he should have traced the whole to a full discovery, even to conviction: But since, instead of doing so, he thought proper chimerically to set up an opposition, I think he will find in the end that *he reasoned wrongly upon wrong principles*.

You

You now see, sir, how the argument stands between us. I will refresh your memory with a short state of it. You assert that Mr. T—yl—r intended to monopolise the borough, he denies it. The negative which he gives to your bare affirmative, is with us, who know ye both, a sufficient answer; but his negative is attended with corroborating circumstances. To reveal himself to you, whose character wanted no illustration, would have been the grossest absurdity, therefore not imputable to Mr. T—yl—r. Besides, you have been challenged to a meeting; you have been provoked to the proof; but instead of coming forth in open day-light, you have taken to cover, and I am now obliged to be at the pains of digging you out. Add to this, that Mr. T—yl—r was ever ready not only to refute the charge, but to leave it to gentlemen of rank both in town and the country to mark out the boundaries of his ambition. Engagements entered into in so open and solemn a manner would have been the rules of his conduct; for he now feels the good-will of the neighbouring gentlemen so forcibly, that he would not lightly be induced to forfeit their esteem. Could more than this be offered? most clearly not; and it is as clear that from the premises

I am

I am now warranted to conclude that Mr. T—yl—r is a candidate upon principles of moderation, and that he is not the person who wants to command the borough, and make both the members.

But there are who have been dictators at Wells, and want to perpetuate their dictatorship. The men who have been so sanguine in their ambition shall now be made manifest to the world. In order to this, I shall not be content to say "I fancy it," or I *believe* it," or "I *was told* it;" I will adduce the facts; facts, sir, that you are privy to; facts that are too stubborn for a refutation.

As soon as it was known to you that our late representative was to be called to the upper house of parliament, did not you then, sir, as if you alone had a voice at Wells, enter into a treaty with a noble lord to bring in his son though under age, for the vacant seat? the word with you was, *if Mr. Taylor can be kept quiet, the affair may be managed without difficulty*. Your policy in this part of the business had some depth, and I must give you credit for it. You had the art to address yourself to the very nobleman whom Mr.

T—yl—r



T—yl—r had every reason to respect. His obligations, you agreed with yourself, will not permit him to oppose the son of that noble lord, and you therefore were still to have the appearance of being the sole manager of the town of Wells : but, on the other hand, if he should oppose him, he will be forced to renounce his connections, and give you and your JUNTO an opportunity to load him with the charge of ingratitude. The plot, it must be owned, was well imagined, and the situation, which you had thus prepared for Mr. T—yl—r would have been highly embarrassing. What he would have done I cannot say ; but the freemen, I am sure, would have insisted that he should not desert them ; for in fact they were determined not to be cyphers in their own most important concerns any longer ; nay the only one of your body who, besides yourself, has a vote, has not hesitated to declare that he would not have acted with you upon such a plan. Be that as it may, the negotiation went on, and at a particular period was understood to be agreeable to you and to Mr. T—dw—y. Can you deny this to be the fact ? I have read the Letters, which disclose this dark transaction, and were they in my possession I should here insert proper extracts

tracts from them. But Mr. T—yl—r has the letters, and, should you make it necessary, will, as I am informed, be ready to print them. It is now natural to enquire, how came this scheme, which was so well concerted, not to take place? Because there was another person, who, like yourself, had taken upon him to dispose of the borough. Mr. Cl. T—dw—y had many months ago made a foreign alliance with Mr. C—d. The New treaty could not therefore be acceded to, till a banker at Temple-Bar was consulted. A letter was accordingly writ to him, and he insisted upon his Bargain. Good God!—a Bargain for what?—For the freemen of Wells; with whom?—with the person who had undertaken to be the **GUARDIAN OF THEIR LIBERTIES**. Are they to be enslaved by him? to be disposed of to a stranger according to his will and pleasure? Has he a Patent for monopolizing the borough? Does he assume a Power to bargain for his constituents without their own consent? Did the corporation meet upon this business? They did not. Were the Freemen convened to give him a letter of attorney? Nothing of that sort was done. What has this Gentleman taken into his head? Does he think the Borough of Wells is in a few

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years

years become to him an Antigua-Plantation? He may be the Lord of slaves abroad, but he is the representative of freemen in England. I am not inclined to press Mr. T—dw—y too hard; but I would ask him, does he imagine Mr. T—yl—r is to be condemned for *what he has not done*, and that he himself is not to be censured for *what he is now actually doing*? Dean Swift, from whom he may learn more wisdom than from any other Dean whatever, tells a pleasant story. A fat fellow of enormous bulk was got into a crowd: In that situation shoving and elbowing about, and occupying all the space he could, he was still exclaiming, *good lord! How the people press!* a man, who had stood by very quietly, could not help telling him, *take your own bundle of guts out of the way, and then we shall have room enough.* In fact it is neither modest, nor decent, in so young a member, whose family but very lately found their way into the corporation, and who was chosen himself upon the foundation of being a native, to begin already to render his will the law of the place, in return for the compliment he has met with. I am sure that Sir William Wyndham, who was born in the county, and represented it in parliament with unbounded popularity during his life, and with

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immortal honour to his memory, did not, at any one period of that great influence, to which his comprehensive talents entitled him, exert so arbitrary, so unconstitutional an effort of power.

Were I to express Mt. Cl. T—dw—y's sentiments, as they strike me, without any gloss or varnish, it shou'd be in plain English as follows :

*To the worthy Electors of the City of Wells.*

GENTLEMEN,

*The honour of being chosen one of your representatives in parliament, is so great, that my heart is filled with PRIDE instead of GRATITUDE, and therefore I now modestly tell you, that you behave very ill, if you do not let me choose the other member. I have bargained for you with a rich man, who has not the spirit to part with much money ; but keep your own counsel, and you will have the name of selling yourselves, which will be your apology for rejecting a townsman, who has presumed to offer himself without asking my leave. Should you chuse Mr. T—yl—r, I tell you fairly, I never can agree with him. He has taken upon him to censure my conduct for voting in p—lm—t*

*against the interests of the borough I represent, in a matter which was supported against me by the two representatives of the county. Besides, should Mr. T—yl—r be chosen, he has a large fortune, will spend much of it amongst ye, and by his munificence will make it necessary for me to do some good; whereas if Mr. C——d is the man, he will live at Temple-bar, may come here once more to give ten guineas to those of the poor who don't buzza for Taylor, and so I shall be in no apprehension of being excelled in generosity by the public spirit of my colleague. Mr. Child's fortune has accrued from the use of public money as well as Mr. Taylor's, and I recommend him.*

*Witness Ourselves, &c.*

*N. B. I had no compliment to pay the gentlemen of the county: Mr. C——d is Mortgagee in possession of 200l per annum in Somerset, and is therefore the fittest man to represent you.*

*Thus I translate the language of Mr. T—dw—y's heart in plain and honest terms. Let me now, sir, return to you. Are not the facts here advanced true and undeniable? Should you offer to controvert them, the same letters, to which I have already alluded, will ascertain the whole beyond the*

the possibility of a Doubt. Who then wants to make the two members? Men of sense will answer the question, and therefore I will urge the point no further.

By this time, I flatter myself, I stand sufficiently justified in my intention to vote for Mr. T—yl—r. I will add a few reasons more, and then conclude this letter, which has swelled to a size I did not foresee. Not only, sir, the clandestine transactions in which you have been engaged, without any authority from the worthy electors of this city, are strong incentives to my present conduct, but the deeds you have done in open day, since the opposition began, confirm my resolution. When I saw a spiritual corporation, under your auspices, parading the streets of Wells, entering shops and public-houses, soliciting votes, receiving affronts, despised, rejected, and rebuffed in many places, and indeed condemned in all; I was shocked for the dignity of the church, and I felt a generous pang of concern for the person, who could thus in his grey hairs expose old age to scorn. I could not help reflecting what your temper of mind would be, should the laity attempt to make a dignitary in your department, and I therefore



determined to oppose your unseemly obtrusion upon us in civil matters. I shall not expatiate upon the industry with which falsehood and detraction have been daily issued out, and propagated by the tools of your JUNTO; nor shall I say a word of the imperious menaces, which have been sent to alehouse-men and other publicans, importing that their licences should not be renewed, if they presumed to vote according to their duty with a spirit of independence. Those facts are sufficiently known, and it is with indignation that every honest mind beholds the honour of magistracy perverted to such ignoble ends. Let that busy creature of faction, THE CURRIER, hunt out the little debts of the well-meaning and laborious journeyman, and threaten to arrest him for drinking a glass of October to the success of Mr. T—yl—r: Let him gallop three times a week to Bristol, to cabal in punch-houses; let him take Bath in his way back, and there drop a lie to delude the ignorant; and if he has a mind, let him once more look a JUDGMENT FOR BRIBERY in the face; he moves no passion but contempt. But let that other tool of your well-nigh extinguished power beware how he attempts to put halters about the necks of the innocent and inoffensive.

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We could allow him to walk the streets of Wells FULL-CHESTED with pride, his head tossed up aloft to snuff the air with disdain, while his arms swing to and fro to help him along under the weight of his importance ; we could permit him to discharge labourers from the turnpike-road, for HUZZAING FOR TAYLOR ; the men so discharged can find as good employment elsewhere. These are but little acts of power, and, *if he does not put allum in his bread*, I should not be for differing with him about trifles. But the matter grows serious, when a man raised to a share in the administration of justice, wilfully comes forth to prostitute that very justice, which is entrusted to him, because his mind is tainted with the pernicious venom of a party. When a set of harmless fellows, without uttering an oath, without weapons of any sort, without shewing any tendency to a breach of the peace, gather together upon no bad design, and without striking any terror, but merely to drink the health of a candidate for the place in which they live, shall a justice of the peace, because he is of the contrary party, arm himself with the terrors of the law, and read the riot-act, that men may be hanged for no other crime than wishing well to a townsman whom they

have reason to love ? is not this making a cruel use of a severe act of parliament to counteract one of the most essential laws of the land, that law which enacts, that the elections of members to serve in parliament shall be free ? the proceeding is as bad as if you, sir, in your sacred function, should refuse the sacrament to a voter for Mr. T—yl—r, alledging that he is not in charity with Mr C—d. I must dwell a moment longer upon this topic. Let not the proceeding be called a mere error of judgment in the magistrate. Were he known to be a person of moderation, it might pass for a colourable excuse ; but when his attachments are considered, and when it is added, that there was within a few doors a mob, if that word must be used, at least as riotous for Mr. C—d, and that this worthy justice was not guilty of such an error, as to put them in danger of being hanged ; in this case I cannot but pronounce that his behaviour has too much the aspect of partiality, rancour, and oppression. Must it be made felony without clergy to wish well to Mr. T—yl—r ? Must the gallows be set up to canvass for Mr. C—d in Wells ? After that, I should not wonder to hear you deny the unhappy victims christian burial.

But



But to draw to a conclusion :—You are egregiously mistaken if you imagine that we are to be thus terrified out of our votes ; and I will let Mr. C——d know that he too is mistaken if he thinks we are to be BRIBED out of them. I say BRIBED, and I am authorised to do it by that memorable speech which he made a few nights ago at the Swan : *Gentlemen, my business calls me from hence ; I shall return again ; my agents will entertain you in the mean time, and I am determined* (throwing his hat upon the table as a pledge for his word) *to carry the borough if it costs me TEN THOUSAND POUNDS.* Is this the man whom Mr. Cl. T—dw—y has found for us ? is this the understanding upon which our LIBERTY and PROPERTY are to depend ? Sir, Mr. C——d may fight for your passions, and the passions of Mr. Cl. T—dw—y, and he may be as expensive as he pleases upon the occasion. He is a banker, and as his fortune was made by the deposits the public made with him, let him refund to the public as much as he will, I see no harm in his doing it ; but if he, or the currier, or any other of his agents, offers me a Bribe, I will convince him that Mr. Cl. T—dw—y has traduced me, if he said I am  
to

to be bought. There are amongst us, and I am confident it will appear so, a sett of burgesses and freemen superior to corruption, who know Mr. T—yl—r, who are sensible of the services he has already done the town, who can foresee further advantages likely to accrue from the generosity of his spirit, and who will be able by an unquestionable majority to make him our representative in parliament. Whenever that day comes, I will venture to prophesy from his love of industry, and his knowledge of business, that trade and manufactures will be encouraged at Wells, and that we shall boast more thriving young men sent forth into the world by Mr. T—yl—r from this place, than perhaps any other borough in the kingdom. These are the bribes we expect from him; they are honest bribes, and as I know we shall meet with such, he has my hearty wishes for his success; and then I would recommend to you the following text, very little altered from the sacred page, for the next sermon you shall preach: *Behold this was the iniquity of the Dean's faction at Wells, pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness; neither did they strengthen the hand of the poor and*

needy

( 43 )

*needy ; and they were haughty, and committed  
abomination before me ; therefore I took them a-  
way, as I saw good."*

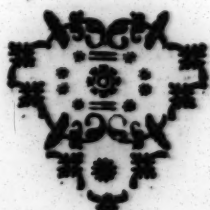
I am, Sir,

*Your most obedient Servant,*

**But NOT YOUR VOTER,**

\* \* \* \* \*

WELLS, Oct. 12, 1765.







## POSTSCRIPT. Oct. 21st.

I Cannot dismiss this letter, without paying due attention to Mr. *Clem. Tudway* and the *Dean of Wells*, who have appeared together in *Pope's Chronicle* of Thursday last, like the two Kings of Brentford, smelling to the same nose-gay. It is indeed a little unlucky, that they were obliged to follow Mr. Taylor's Address in the same paper, because, being so contrasted to a plain narrative of facts, the public will be better able to judge what sort of an answer these two gentlemen have given.

That a plan was formed for the ruin of Mr. Clem. Tudway's interest, he tells us, is plain from Mr. *Taylor's behaviour to his father's family since his return from Germany*. Besides this *he had assurances from the Dean and Lord Digby*, and thus *the proof is strong and clear*. I wish he would assist my understanding, for I own I do not comprehend his reasoning. On which of his proofs does he rely? Upon the former, I suppose, for he calls it, *to him the most convincing proof of Mr. Taylor's intention*. This, I take it, is paying a greater compliment  
to

to his own judgment than to the information of the Dean or Lord Digby: the noble lord and the reverend tale-bearer have thus very little thanks for their pains. When the folio edition of Mr. *Tudway's* apology comes into the world, he will there, I presume, give at large the particulars of Mr. *Taylor's* conduct, that we may judge how acutely he has argued with himself upon this matter. I long much for a specimen of his sagacity in tracing the actions of men up to those principles which give rise to them; and I will before hand freely declare, that, there are some certain points, in regard to which I hold Mr. *Taylor* altogether indefensible.

1st. It was wrong of Mr. Taylor to bring back the races to Wells, (after an intermission of twelve years) without previously consulting Mr. *Tudway* or any of his family.—I know the good of the town is urged in excuse of this measure.—Better than a thousand pounds, they say, was spent at Wells during the race-week.—It may be so, but, to use the Dean's words, it is *ambition* and *assurance* in Mr. Taylor to do good without asking leave of the *Tudway-family*.

2dly.

2dly. When Paris Taylor was appointed sheriff of the county, he chose twenty free-men for his javelin-men, without taking, as he ought to have done, Mr. Tudway's directions: and this, it must be acknowledged, carries with it evident marks of a dangerous ambition derived to him from his father, who is therefore accountable for it.

3dly. When a scheme to establish a manufacture in the borough was in agitation, Mr. Tudway with that *modest reserve* which is natural to him on such occasions, subscribed a guinea; but PETER TAYLOR *profligately* and *impudently* gave ONE HUNDRED POUNDS; and this, I think, is very justly resented by the whole Tudway family.

4thly. PETER TAYLOR was so far carried by his *ambition* and *assurance*, that he presumed to bid for an estate at a public auction against Mr. Tudway, which is, in my opinion, an insult never to be forgiven.

These facts, properly enforced, will, I fear, go a great way to prove a deep design to engross the borough: But still, I think, further proof will be wanted. Doctor *Swift* talks of  
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a professor, who was particularly shrewd in discovering plots and conspiracies against the government. He advised great statesmen to examine into the diet of all suspected persons; their times of eating; upon which side they lay in bed; with which hand they wiped their posteriors; to take a strict view of their excrements, and from the colour, the odour, the taste, the consistence, the crudeness, or maturity of digestion, form a judgment of their thoughts and designs; because men are never so serious, thoughtful, and intent, as when they are at stool; which he found by frequent experiment; for in such conjunctures, when he used merely as a trial to consider which was the best way of murdering the king, his ordure would take a tincture of green, but quite different when he thought only of raising an insurrection, or burning the metropolis. I hope Mr. Tudway has employed a spy of this sort upon Mr. Taylor: there are many in the town very proper for the occupation; one in particular, who is now lying, sputtering, and doing every species of dirty work with a view to a Canonry, would acquit himself very handsomely in such an office. From him I expect to hear what the habit of body will be when a man's ambition will not be confined within the narrow limits of one member, together with many important

portant anecdotes of the same nature, which will fully evince, to the satisfaction of every unprejudiced mind, that Mr. Taylor peremptorily resolved to ruin Mr. Tudway's interest.

If proofs of this sort should fail, I fear Mr. *Tudway* must then resort back to the information he had from the *Dean* and Lord *Digby*. In this case, it will possibly be argued that, when a man tells me of a fact, concerning which I had no other knowledge, this information is only HEARSAY, and if I give credit to it, I then *depend upon Hearsay*. But Mr. CLEM. TUDWAY chuses to alter the natural import of words. However, if he did not *depend upon Hearsay*, what does he depend upon? He assures us, *the proof is strong and clear*, and this with weak minds will, I suppose, pass for very good logick.

I am glad to find this gentleman *has formed no evil design against his country*. I had a pure night's rest after hearing this, for I had read how the united provinces were well nigh ruined by a rat, and what must become of poor old England, if she had so formidable an enemy as Mr. *Clem. Tudway*?—The declaration he has been pleased to make will, no doubt

doubt, have a wonderful influence upon our affairs in all foreign courts. The *Canada bills*, I dare say, will shortly be paid; and the *Manilla ransom* cannot be long in suspense; for I am apt to believe the powers of Europe will be induced to take the gentleman's word, when they are told that the *statute of treasons* is still in force in this kingdom.

That he was with his friend Mr. *Mitchell* in *Dorsetshire*, and *not in London*, as was falsely and maliciously suggested, might be matter of triumph to Mr *Tudway*, if he had not told us, that *he did not repent of his opposition*. If he did not go to *Dorsetshire*, as Mrs. Cole did to *Bologne*, TO REPENT, I cannot see what difference it makes where he was. A man charged by the late Mr. Pope with keeping an ale-house upon Tower-hill, swore it was a damned lye, for it was in Holbourn he kept an ale-house, and he never lived upon Tower-hill: But for my part I cannot see what he gained by proving an *alibi*, since he sold scurvy-grafs ale wherever he lived.

I like Mr. *Tudway's* notion of self-defence: if drawing his sword, and making the first assault may be termed self-defence, he is right; but



but to a plain understanding I am afraid he will appear the AGGRESSOR ; as much the aggressor as the poor *knicht of La Mancha* when he rode full tilt at a windmill, and (MARK THE CATASTROPHE !) got himself and his horse overset by it.

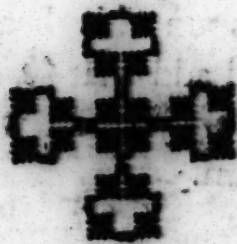
The Dean of Wells is the very pink of courtesy : He answers like the man in the play, *You lye, I did not give you the lye, and I'll bet you five pounds I did not.*—He proves what PETER TAYLOR said to him by telling us what Paris Taylor said to Lord Digby : I have read of a boy who walked the streets crying out *My father cures all sorts of disorders* ; the father following at a distance answered *The child says true.* Perhaps the Dean imagines Mr. Taylor is weak enough in like manner to confirm every thing his son shall say ; but the world will hardly adopt so absurd a notion. Mr. *Tudway* is so obliging as to give us hopes that he will write again ; but the Dean is cruel, for he threatens to write no more. It was the advice of a newgate-attorney to his client, *Confess nothing, and let 'em prove all they can* ; If that be the Dean's design, he may, for ought I can tell, be very wise in so doing ; though, if I were of his council, I should bid him

him Try your hand once more, Mr. Dean, who knows but you may succeed better? Put your materials together in your own manner, but before you publish, call in somebody to correct the stile, and if he lends you a little of that sort of English, which is in common use among gentlemen, I think it will not be thought amiss. You may likewise employ some anonymous hand to reason the matter for you: Let him say, "Surely every honest man will believe the Dean before Mr. Taylor, for the Dean, &c.—let him hint gently that the Dean has through life maintained a very amiable character: But I would be sparing of my expressions on this head; and if your scribbler should add that *he does not know the person whom he praises*, all who DO KNOW YOU will believe him.

Indeed if a good round assertion were craftily drawn up in the form of an affidavit, I should like that still the better; and if there can be found amongst you some body hardy enough to swear it, your cause would receive great advantage. Take notice, as it is not to be sworn in a court of record, your affidavit man will run no great risk of being indicted for *Perjury*, which I take to be a circumstance of much

much moment, at a time like this, when to  
keep Mr. Taylor out of the borough of Wells  
a good deal of falshood is absolutely necessary.

**F I N I S.**





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